

Bangla Bandh On 27th July Last

Prices of daily necessities of life are rising by leaps and bounds ; there has been of late a further cut in rice ration quota in the areas under statutory rationing ; supply of food grains from ration shops in the areas under modified rationing has virtually stopped ; thousands of bargadars have been illegally evicted from the lands they had been cultivating for decades ; unemployment problem has assumed alarming proportions ; closure and lock-out of industrial establishments and lay-off and retrenchment of workers have become more common ; for want of yarn lakhs of weavers have been thrown on to the street without any means to keep their body and soul together ; power crisis has not only hard-hit production and made thousands of workers unemployed but also seriously affected everyday life of common men ; police terror and oppression has reached an all-time record ; corruption has become more rampant.

In short, belying all tall promises and demagogic claims by the Congress leaders and ministers, the sufferings of the people have intensified manifold during the present Congress regime in West Bengal. Exasperated and burning with indignation, the people naturally want the left and democratic parties functioning in the state to develop a sustained mighty united mass movement against the Congress rulers for the redress of their grievances.

CPI(M)'s Reluctance to Develop Sustained Movement

In cognizance of this mood and mind of the people, the SUCI along with the RSP and the Forward Bloc mooted in the meetings of the eight parties, on more than one occasion, the proposal for adopting a programme for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement in West Bengal against the Congress Government and the vested interests. But every time the CPI(M) leadership on this or that pretext bypassed the proposal and at one time openly said that, because of the rains, it would not be possible to even hold joint mass meetings before September. This clearly exposed that the CPI(M) was not willing at the present time to develop a sustained united mass movement in West Bengal against the Congress Government. Having failed to have a programme for developing such a movement adopted by the eight parties because of

this reluctant attitude of the CPI(M), we of our own started bringing out processions, staging rallies and demonstrations, collecting mass signatures, organising mass deputations, mobilising public opinion and doing whatever was possible for us to do with our limited strength to organise the masses for a sustained united mass movement. When reports of these activities of us started coming out in the newspapers and the people and the Press began commenting that the CPI(M) did not want a united movement, the CPI(M) leadership under pressure of criticism by their own ranks and supporters and the masses of the people threw the proposal for giving a call for Bangla bandh for a day in the meeting of the eight parties without any programme for mobilising public opinion and organising the masses to make the proposed bandh successful. It may be noted that in the mean time the CPI(M)-led CITU, without consulting with and behind the back of the other Central Trade Union organisations of the lefts, with which it has been moving unitedly in the trade union field, addressed letters to the Congress-led BPNTUC and HMS and the CPI-led BPTUC requesting them to fix up a mutually agreed date for Bangla bandh for a day. This move by the CITU not only was against the accepted code of conduct and detrimental to united movement but also exposed what the CPI(M) was really after. By

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UCTU CONVENTION

All India anti-unemployment day and a two-day convention on the recommendation of the Third Pay Commission were held at New Delhi on 23rd, 25th and 26th July by the United Council of Trade Unions, composed of CITU, UTUC (Lenin Sarani), HMP, UTUC (Bowbazar) and TUCC.

The meeting on 23rd July as All India Un-employment Day was held at Boat Club ground overlooking the Parliament Bhaban. A rally was organised by Delhi and Haryana units of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and the rally paraded the different streets of New Delhi in the midst of heavy downpour. Incidentally it may be mentioned that UTUC (Lenin Sarani) alone organised rally on this occasion. The meeting was addressed by Comrades George Fernandes, Convenor, UCTU, Ram Prasad, General Secretary, Haryana Khet

Mazdoor Federation, Jyoti Basu (CITU), Jatin Chakraborty (UTUC Bowbazar) and others.

throwing this proposal for giving a call for Bangla bandh without having the necessary preparation for it, the CPI(M) leadership wanted, *firstly*, to silence the criticism against them by their ranks and supporters as well as by the masses of the people for their unwillingness to develop a sustained united mass movement and, *secondly*, to start and finish a sustained mighty united mass movement through a perfunctory bandh call, avoiding the responsibility and obligation of developing this movement. But when our Party unitedly with the RSP and the Forward Bloc doggedly fought

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The convention on 25th and 26th July was conducted by a five member presidium composed of Comrades B. T. Ranadive (CITU) Pritish Chandra (UTUC—Lenin Sarani) George Fernandes (HMP), Jatin Chakraborty (UTUC—Bowbazar) and Chitta Bose (TUCC). All the members of the presidium gave inaugural speeches. Four resolutions were adopted in the convention. The first resolution on withdrawal of DIR and ban on strike was moved by Com. A. K. Roy on behalf of UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and supported by others. The second resolution on the Rajasthan State Government employees' strike was moved by Com. Anil Bose of UTUC (Bowbazar), the third resolution on Recommendation of the Third Pay commission was moved by Com. Vyas of Central Government employees and supported by, among others, Com. K.P. Singh and Com. V.N. Singh of UTUC (Lenin Sarani) of Bihar state. The fourth resolution on Bonus for All section of working people was moved by Com. Pandey (CITU).

BIHAR IN THE GRIP OF DROUGHT AND FLOOD

Patna, July 20—Parts of Bihar are at present passing through man-made famine condition, severe drought and floods and the concomitant results thereof. Central and North Bihar is in the grip of severe drought while large portions of Saharsa, Darbhanga and Madhubani districts have been seriously affected by this year's Kosi floods.

For the second successive year Central and North Bihar, which, according to a reliable source, produces nearly 80 per cent of the total Kharif and bhadaï crops in the whole of Bihar, is severely affected with drought. Against a normal rainfall of about 325 millimetres, the rainfall up till now is only slightly over 10 millimetres. The whole area in Central and North Bihar is now parched and bone-dry and no trace of green colour, which the soil generally wears at this time of the year in this part of the state, is to be found. There is no relief work from the side of the Government. The so-called fair price shops are without food grains. The people are without work and without any money. Starvation has become the general rule. Hungry villagers leaving their hearths and homes and in search of work and food have started moving into the adjoining towns. Some of them have even migrated to other states like West Bengal. Reports of starvation death are pouring in but the Government in its usual manner is denying that people have died of starvation.

Unscrupulous political leaders are trying to cash in taking advantage of the acute sufferings of the people. Mr. Kedar Pande, the erstwhile discredited Chief Minister of Bihar, who, when he was the Chief Minister, denied that people had died of starvation and claimed that enough relief measures had been taken to mitigate the sufferings of the drought-affected people of Central and North Bihar, has joined hands with Mr. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, another discredited former Chief Minister of the state

and been talking of 'famine-condition' and 'mass starvation deaths' in this part of Bihar. The tears of these discredited Congress leaders and former Chief Ministers and their tribes over the famine-condition in Central and North Bihar and consequent miseries of the people are crocodile tears designed to serve their group interests, rehabilitate themselves politically and satisfy their craze for power and pelf by exploiting the suffering people as pawns in their unscrupulous political game. In the interest of developing a united mass movement against the ruling bourgeoisie, the Congress Governments at the Centre and in the state and their pro-capitalist pro-blackmarketeer anti-people policies, which are mainly responsible for the present drought and famine condition in the area and sufferings of the people, the role of the ruling Congress and these discredited Congress leaders must be exposed. When in Ministerial chair these Congress leaders behaved as tyrants of the first degree caring not even a whit for the miseries of the people but, on the contrary, doing all they could do in brutally suppressing the people but when out of Ministerial office they are talking in such a way as if they are the fighting champions of all genuine causes of the people. Unless our people come out of the influence of these hypocrites, their movements cannot succeed and their demands cannot be realised.

When Central and North Bihar for the second successive year is in the grip of severe drought, about 500 square miles in the districts of Saharsa, Darbhanga and Madhubani have been affected

by this year's Kosi floods. According to a statement made by the Revenue Minister of Bihar on the floor of the Legislative Assembly in reply to a call-attention motion, the floods have affected 4,00,000 people, washed away 300 houses and destroyed the standing bhadaï crops, particularly maize, in the flood-hit areas. The actual situation is far worse. Uptill now very little relief work has been started. Only some fair price shops have been opened. But most of them are without any food grains. Besides, there being no work, the flood-affected people have no money to purchase food grains even if there had been food grains in the shops. Reports of starvation-death and large-scale attack of water-borne

epidemic diseases are pouring in. But the authorities in their characteristic fashion are denying that people have died of starvation. At best they are ready to accept that deaths due to lack of nutrition have taken place. Mr. Ghafoor, the present Chief Minister, is reproducing those very words which Mr. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha and Mr. Kedar Pande had said when they were Chief Minister. The same policy of stunt and blatant lie directed to serve the vested interests, as is followed by the Congress, is continuing.

Only an organised sustained united militant mass movement can change the present unbearable situation.

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Weavers of Jangipur Conduct Movement Against Congress Government

Jangipur, July 11—An organisation of the weavers of Raghunathganj P.S. has been formed recently under the name and title Raghunathganj Thana Tant Silpi Samity. Com. Brajamohon Das has been elected its Secretary.

It may be recalled that the yarn-policy of the Congress Governments at the Centre and in West Bengal has made yarn disappear from market, with no Government machinery as yet to ensure supply of yarn to the weavers. The result of it has been that the weavers are now completely jobless and starving.

To meet this unbearable situation about 2000 weavers residing in different parts of Raghunathganj P.S., organised under the Raghunathganj Thana Tant Silpi Samity, have started a movement with the following demands:—(1) regular supply of yarn at reasonable price through Government shops should be ensured, (2) every weaver should be provided with an adequate amount of money as aid to enable him to purchase yarn at the beginning

supplied by the Government and (3) so long as the Government aid is not given and the supply of yarn is not made, every weaver should be given G.R. at the rate of 4 kgs. of rice or wheat per head per week so that he can maintain himself and his family.

The weavers on these demands brought out processions on 18th, 25th and 30th June last and staged a squadding demonstration before the office of the sub-divisional magistrate on the 10th July last. The movement has succeeded in making the administration supply to each of the 1400 weavers a bundle of yarn weighing about 4 kilogrammes, which can keep him in work for four to five days. Encouraged by the success of the movement, the weavers are preparing for a bigger movement.

Defeat Disruptive and Opportunist Politics of CPI and CPI(M)

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for the adoption of a programme for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement with bandh and, if necessary, continuous bandh, as a part of it, the CPI(M) leadership were ultimately compelled to reluctantly adopt that programme, though however at no time did they move seriously to implement that programme or participate in whatever part of it was implemented by others.

CPI's Disruptive Game

Aware of the increasing indignation and fighting mood of the people of West Bengal for the continuous deterioration of their living condition, the CPI was keenly watching the moves of the eight parties and the insistence of our party unitedly with the RSP and the Forward Bloc for the adoption of a programme for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement. It also correctly smelt that the CPI(M) was unwilling to develop at the present time a sustained mighty united mass movement in West Bengal against the Congress Government. But it understood that, in spite of the CPI(M)'s reluctance, such a movement would develop in course of time owing to the increasing indignation of the people against the Congress Government and that when such a movement would gather momentum, the CPI would be placed into a critical position and be left with no other alternative than to either remain with the Congress against the people's movement thereby isolating itself from the masses of the people and losing completely whatever little left image the party still had in West Bengal or come over to the side of the people's movement forsaking the Congress in renunciation of its all-India policy. The CPI because of its present political line was not in a position to face

any of these two eventualities now. Hence, to avoid being placed into such a critical position and with the sole purpose of frustrating the programme already adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement the CPI unilaterally issued a call for Bangla bandh on July 27 without consulting with the left parties with the expectation that the eight parties would not oppose it because of the issues on which the call for the bandh had been given, the CPI(M) would support it, the real motive of the CPI, namely, to frustrate under cover of a bandh call the programme adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement, would not be exposed to the people and its almost lost left image in West Bengal would, to some extent, be refurbished for giving the bandh call on issues in which the people had interests. Thus, the CPI's object was to kill more than one bird with one stone.

We could not support the bandh call by the CPI not because it had been given unilaterally by the CPI without consulting with us, however objectionable such a unilateral call might otherwise be from the point of view of developing a united mass movement but because the bandh was designed to frustrate the programme already adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement. Besides, the CPI was negotiating with the Congress and the Congress Government, that are responsible for the present miseries of the people, to make the bandh successful. It even openly declared that the bandh was not directed against the Congress and the Congress Government. A bandh sought to be organised in tacit understanding with

and not directed against the Congress and the Congress Government was not only not in the interest of the people but, on the contrary, under cover of a bandh call, a conspiracy to hoodwink the people and frustrate the possibilities of developing a sustained mighty united mass movement to safeguard the interests of the people. Such an ill-designed bandh call could by no means be supported.

Opportunist Politics of CPI(M)

In the meeting of the eight parties, when the question of the unilateral bandh call by the CPI was being discussed, we placed this assessment of ours about the real motive of the CPI behind its bandh call. The CPI(M) leaders could not disagree with this assessment of ours. But strangely enough, just after a few days the CPI(M) informed other parties in the eight-party meeting that it had decided to support the CPI's bandh call and began to put pressure on us, the RSP and the Forward Bloc to support it also. But when our Party, the RSP and the Forward Bloc refused to support the CPI's bandh call which under cover of a bandh call was in actuality a conspiracy to frustrate the programme adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement, the CPI(M) along with four other parties, that are always found to behave as yes-men of the CPI(M), gave a separate call for a bandh on the same day, on which the CPI had called the bandh, without caring a whit to maintain the unity of the eight parties that was developing in West Bengal, betraying the programme adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained united mass movement including that of strike and

bandh and, if necessary, continuous general strike and bandh and going back on its own word given two days ago that in case of difference on the question of the CPI's bandh call the CPI(M) would certainly not support the CPI at the cost of the unity of the eight-party combination. That the separate call by the CPI(M) for a bandh was only an eye-wash meant to deceive the ranks and supporters of the party and the people would be evident from the open statement made by the CPI(M) leaders and also published in the Press that in case the CPI would call off the bandh, the CPI(M) also would follow suit. When in the genuine interest of developing a sustained mighty united mass movement in West Bengal it was essentially necessary to expose the disruptive game of the CPI and stick to and carry forward the programme adopted by the eight parties for the development of such a movement, the CPI(M) not only did not expose the CPI's disruptive game but, on the contrary, lent support to it by its call for a bandh and betrayed the programme unanimously adopted by the eight parties for a sustained mighty united mass movement to which it itself was committed.

Had the CPI(M) been really serious of organising a Bangla bandh then it would have sincerely implemented the eight parties' programme. For, this programme also includes that of general strikes and bandhs as a part of it. What then made the CPI(M) leadership support the CPI's ill-designed and disruptive bandh call even at the cost of the unity of the eight parties betraying the programme adopted by the eight parties to which the CPI(M) itself was committed? The reason is not far to seek. However loud the CPI(M) leadership may be in their verbal opposition to and

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CPI(M) Moving to Be More Close to CPI and Congress

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denunciation of the Congress and the Congress Government, the reality is that since at the present time they do not want to come so much into open confrontation with the Congress, they had all through sought to escape from carrying out the responsibility and obligation of developing a sustained united mass movement, their frequent lip service to such a movement notwithstanding. But as they have not the courage to admit it to their ranks and supporters and the masses of the people, they had to take recourse to this sort of opportunist politics. Though under pressure from the ranks and supporters of the party, the masses of the people, the SUCI, the RSP and the Forward Bloc, the CPI(M) leadership were forced to commit themselves to the programme adopted by the eight parties for the development of a sustained mighty united mass movement, they had all through been searching for excuses for escape from the path of developing such a movement. At this time the CPI's bandh call appeared to the CPI(M) as a straw to a drowning man and it caught at it. The CPI(M) found in the disruptive bandh call of the CPI an opportunity to (1) escape from the responsibility and obligation to develop a sustained mighty united mass movement, (2) confuse the ranks and supporters of the party and the masses of the people and conceal from them its main objective of escaping from the path of developing a sustained mighty united movement under the smoke-screen of 'revolutionary' and 'militant' posture in the field of movement and (3) evade the risk of confrontation with the Congress by lining up with the CPI and giving the call for Bangla bandh on the same day on which the call for bandh had been given

by the CPI, which because of its alliance with the Congress, enjoys immunity from Congress attacks; that is, by giving a call for bandh it would be possible for the CPI(M) to show its ranks and the people that it was all for a mighty united movement without being actually engaged seriously in any such movement and without facing any risk of confrontation with the Congress.

In passing it may be mentioned that our Party is not opposed to developing mass movements unitedly with the CPI. On the contrary, it is our Party that had been consistently stressing on the need for developing mass movements unitedly with the CPI on the basis of specific issues and thereby correctly handling its contradictions with the Congress and trying to arrest it in united mass movements initiated by the eight parties as far as practicable in the prevailing situation. We in support of our contention even cited instances of movements conducted by the CPI(M) unitedly with the CPI in other states on specific issues. But every time our Party in the meeting of the eight parties had said all these things the CPI(M) leaders had opposed our stand and advanced the view that no matter whatever might have happened in other states, no united movement with the CPI even on specific issues was possible in West Bengal unless the CPI cut all its connections with the Congress. The CPI(M) leadership, which till the other day thus opposed our proposal suggesting the need for developing movements by the eight parties unitedly with the CPI even on specific issues, overnight made a somersault and ran amuck to support the CPI's call for the bandh on July 27. They did it without caring a whit for the unity which was developing among the left and demo-

cratic forces in West Bengal through the eight-party combination and they did it at a time and on such an act by the CPI which was solely designed to frustrate all possibilities of developing a sustained mighty united mass movement. By adopting this extremely opportunist policy, they not only frustrated the sustained mighty united mass movement, that was developing in West Bengal against the Congress Government but also deceived their ranks and supporters and the masses the people.

It is reported in newspapers that the CPI(M) leader, Mr. Namboodiripad, had in a secret meeting at Delhi assured the CPI leader, Mr. Krishnan, of the CPI(M)'s support for the CPI's bandh call. If the report is true (the report has been contradicted by the CPI leader, Mr. Indrajit Gupta but it has not been contradicted by Mr. Krishnan and Namboodiripad or any other CPI(M) leader) then this assurance was given behind the back of the eight parties, an act which is against the code of conduct that guides the eight parties and detrimental to the unity of the left and democratic parties and forces and united movements. Such an act detrimental to the unity of the left and democratic parties and forces and against the accepted code of conduct was done by the CPI(M)-led CITU also when it behind the back of other Central Trade Union Organisations led by other partners of the eight-party combination addressed letters to the Congress led and the CPI-led Central Trade Union Organisations for fixing a date for Bangla bandh. These facts indicate the direction to which the wind of the CPI(M) is actually blowing and expose what the CPI(M) is really after under the smoke-screen of anti-Congress and anti-CPI utterances. Furthermore, in the meeting of the eight parties

on July 13 the CPI(M) leaders assured other parties that in case of difference on the question of the CPI's bandh call the CPI(M) would certainly not support the CPI at the cost of the unity of the eight parties but they threw this assurance into waste-paper basket within a couple of days in the meeting of the eight parties on July 15. To cover up this *volte-face*, the CPI(M) leadership have suddenly discovered that the CPI, because of the deepening of crisis, is going away from those policies, for which it went over to the side of the Congress leaving the camp of the left and democratic forces (vide recent resolution of the Central Committee of the party published in Ganasakti dated July 23). The secret meeting of Mr. Namboodiripad with Mr. Krishnan, the CITU's letters to the BPNTUC, the HMS and the BPTUC behind the back of the Central Trade Union Organisations led by the SUCI, the RSP and the Forward Bloc, the support by the CPI(M) to the CPI's bandh call even at the cost of the unity of the eight parties, betraying the programme adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement and retracting the assurance given two days ago that in case of difference on the CPI's bandh call the CPI(M) would not support the bandh call at the cost of the unity of the eight parties and the sudden discovery by its Central Committee that the CPI's bandh call was indicative of the CPI's shift in policies towards left and democratic unity and united democratic movements are some of the facts which clearly point out that the CPI(M) is actually going to be more close to and make its relation better with the CPI and the Congress in spite of its anti-CPI and,

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OUTCOME OF BANDH CONFIRMS OUR READING

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more so, anti-Congress stance continuing in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura for petty party interests and exigency of election. (We shall deal with this question sometime later and for the present we simply mention it here) The CPI has rightly caught this move by the CPI(M). For this reason, Mr. Gopal Banerjee, Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI, has not failed to reciprocate this appreciation of the CPI by the CPI(M). He has welcomed the separate call by the CPI(M) for the bandh on the same date as the first step, though hesitant, away from rabid anti-Congressism.

Our Appeal to people before Bandh

In the circumstances, our party unitedly with the RSP and the Forward Bloc felt that to support the bandh call would objectively mean to give dividend to the disruptive game of the CPI and the opportunist politics of the CPI(M) as also to help in a c t u a l i t y the conspiracy which under cover of a bandh call was designed to frustrate the possibilities of developing a sustained mighty united mass movement in West Bengal. It has been the experience of our people that the unity of the left and democratic parties and forces and united mass movements had in the past been repeatedly disrupted by either right or left opportunist and disruptive politics of the CPI and the CPI(M). Unless the opportunist and disruptive politics of these two parties are fully exposed to the people and defeated, no sustained mighty united mass movement can be built up and pushed to its logical end in our country, particularly, for the present, in West Bengal. We, therefore, in the interest of developing a sustained mighty united movement called upon the people

to register, on the occasion of the bandh, their strong indignation not merely against the Congress and Congress Government, that are responsible for their present acute sufferings, but also against the disruptive game of the CPI and the opportunist politics of the CPI(M) and to concentrate their energies for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement according to the programme adopted by the eight parties.

People's Response

Our workers and supporters had to undertake a necessary but difficult job to organise public opinion on this line of ours during the material period and we found that our appeal had received tremendous response from the people. T h o u s a n d s of persons heard with rapt attention our say about the bandh on July 27. Even in the face of threats, intimidation and physical attacks by the Congress hoodlums, Chatra Parisad workers and a section of the CPI and the CPI(M) workers, 1,20,000 copies of our bulletin published in connection with the bandh were sold out within a period of only four days from 22nd to 25th July. At the last moment there were heavy demands from the districts for the bulletin but we could not supply them. In Calcutta, 24 P a r g a n a s, Midnapore, Birbhum, to name just a few districts, Congress workers and fanatic sections of the CPI and the CPI(M) workers attacked our workers and tried to snatch away from them the bulletins (at Central Calcutta, it was strange that the Congress workers and the CPI(M) workers combinedly attacked our workers) but everywhere common men came forward and strongly protested against these dastardly attacks on our workers which forced the miscreants to retreat. In course of our

campaign we also came across hundreds of the CPI(M) workers and supporters who attentively heard us and expressed their unhappiness over and in many cases complete disagreement with their party's decision to objectively support the CPI's bandh call by giving a separate call for a bandh on the same day disrupting the developing unity of the left and democratic forces in West Bengal in the form of the eight-party combination and sacrificing the programme of the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement. It had been our experience that to whomsoever we could explain, our stand on the bandh on July 27 was taken as a correct one.

The outcome of the immature bandh call on July 27 confirms our reading. It has established beyond any shade of doubt that—

Firstly, the CPI's frantic efforts to hoodwink the people and refurbish its almost lost left image in West Bengal by so-called militant posture and mock-fight with the Congress, taking advantage of its immunity from attacks by the Government (notwithstanding stray Congress attacks here and there) because of its alliance with the Congress failed, since large sections of the people of West Bengal have understood, though not fully, at least to some extent, that the bandh call by the CPI just on the eve of preparation by the eight parties for a sustained mighty united mass movement was actually a conspiracy under cover of a bandh call to frustrate the programme adopted by the eight parties for the development of such a movement.

Secondly, a large section of the people of West Bengal and quite a large number of the workers and supporters

of the CPI(M) have not failed to understand that betraying the programme adopted by the eight parties for the development of a sustained mighty united mass movement, including a bandh, if necessary, a continuous bandh, and without caring a whit for the unity of the eight parties the CPI(M) supported the disruptive move of the CPI by giving a call for the bandh on the same day. Moreover, after giving the call for the bandh when the CPI(M), other than issuing statements from above, did not make any serious and sincere effort to mobilise public opinion and build up necessary organisation to make the bandh a success then its escapist mentality and opportunist politics became palpable and easier for the people to understand. Because, a party that really wants a bandh, even an isolated bandh for a day, can not take the bandh in so casual a manner as not to make any serious and sincere effort to make it successful.

Thirdly, under the circumstances, in spite of their strong indignation against the Congress Government due to unbearable condition of their living and their strong desire for a movement and for a bandh, the people were to a very large extent confused because of the disruptive game of the CPI and the opportunist politics of the CPI(M). Moreover, when after giving the call for the bandh, the CPI(M), so to say, went into hibernation, made no serious and sincere effort to make the bandh successful and left the whole thing to unorganised spontaneous development, their confusion was further increased. As a result, in the face of threat, intimidation and attacks by the Congress party, the Congress Government and the Congress-backed hoodlums the confused and unorganised people, even if they wished,

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Register Strong Indignation Against Congress Reaction, Disruptionist Game by CPI and Opportunism by CPI(M)

Joint Call by SUCI, RSP and Forward Bloc

Calcutta, July 23—Under the joint auspices of the SUCI, RSP and the Forward Bloc a well-attended public meeting was held here at University Institute today to explain to the people the parties' stand with regard to the call for bandh on 27th July given by the CPI and the CPI(M). The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution which was moved by Com. Subodh Banerjee (SUC) and supported by Asoke Ghosh (F.B). Nikhil Das (RSP) presided.

The resolution drew the attention of the people to the developing crisis, accentuation of the various problems confronting their lives and the rapidly deteriorating condition of living of the masses in West Bengal for which 'the present exploitative capitalist system, the Congress Governments at the centre and in the state and their pro-capitalist anti-people policies are mainly responsible.' It stressed on the need of developing an organised sustained united mass movement to effectively resist the mounting attacks by the ruling capitalist class and the Congress Governments on the toiling people and give some amount of relief to the latter. The resolution noted the efforts of the SUC, RSP and Forward Bloc in developing such a movement and the ultimate adoption by the eight left and democratic parties of a programme for developing such a movement. Explaining the motive of CPI behind the call for the bandh, the resolution observed that "the CPI felt that if such a movement gathered momentum, it would be left with no other alternative but to either remain with the Congress against the people's movement thereby isolating itself from the masses of the people and losing completely its fast-failing left image or come over to the side of the people's movement forsaking the Congress. Not being ready to face any of these eventualities and with the sole purpose of frustrating the development of an organised sustained united mass movement initiated by the left parties, the CPI

issued an isolated and ill-designed call for a bandh on July 27 to be directed not against the Congress Governments, that are mainly responsible for the acute sufferings of the people, expecting that its disruptive game would not be detected, its fast-failing left image would be refurbished, the genuine indignation of the people against the Congress Governments could be misdirected and its petty party interest could be served." As to the CPI(M)'s role in this regard the resolution stated that when it was essentially necessary to expose the disruptionist game of the CPI in the genuine interest of developing an organised sustained united mass movement, the CPI(M), instead of exposing the disruptionist game of the CPI, supported it "even at the risk of endangering the unity of the eight left and democratic parties that has been developing in West Bengal and disrupting the course of a sustained united mass movement already initiated by the parties". As CPI(M) was all through reluctant to develop a sustained mass movement and constantly searching for an excuse for escape, it found in the bandh call by the CPI an opportunity to avoid necessary political and organisational preparations for developing sustained movement and, in reality thereby, to avoid an organised sustained united mass movement while at the same time trying to "pass it on to its ranks and the masses as a party seriously striving for a sustained mass movement. This stand of the CPI(M) is owing to its left

opportunist leanings."

The resolution stated that in the circumstances, to support the bandh call would objectively mean giving dividend to disruptionist game of the CPI and the opportunism of the CPI(M). It, therefore, called upon the people to register their strong

indignation against the Congress Governments backing vested interests and responsible for the sufferings of the people, the disruptionist game of the CPI and the left opportunist role of the CPI(M) and appealed to them to concentrate their energies for building up an organised sustained united mass movement.

8000 SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN WEST BENGAL GOING TO BE JOBLESS

As a result of the proposed revision of the structural pattern of secondary education in West Bengal, which is to come into effect from 1st January, 1974, as many as 8000 teachers of higher secondary schools in the state are going to lose their employment.

This is clear from a circular recently issued by the Director of Public Instruction to the District Inspectors of Schools. The circular, *inter-alia*, states: "A good number of teachers serving in recognised non-government higher secondary schools (aided) may be rendered surplus consequently on revision of the structural pattern of secondary education with effect from January 1, 1974. It is, therefore, necessary that an assessment of the magnitude of the problem should be made." Though the circular has not mentioned the "good number of teachers in recognised non-Government aided higher secondary school" who are going to "be rendered surplus", it is reliably learnt that nearly 8000 teachers will lose their jobs once the new structural pattern comes into force from the beginning of the coming academic year of the schools.

It may be mentioned in this connection that the teachers of the secondary schools have been conducting movements with the demand that there should be no retrenchment of any teacher or non-teaching member of the staff in the higher secondary schools consequent upon revision of the present structural pattern of secondary education in the state. In fact, the revision does not

call for any such retrenchment also. For, the introduction of the new syllabus, which comes into force from January next, requires the retention of those teachers who are supposed to be rendered surplus because of revision of the structural pattern. Besides, in the interest of improvement of teaching the teacher-student ratio should be changed and by this change the retrenchment can be avoided.

But to the Congress rulers logic is a taboo. Hence, it is incumbent on the teaching community in the state in general and the teachers of the secondary schools in particular to develop a united sustained movement and force the Government to drop its idea of declaring about 8000 teachers surplus and making them jobless. In the prevailing situation, when unemployment problem has assumed alarming proportions in West Bengal, any move to make employed persons unemployed must be resisted firmly. The left and democratic parties and the organisations of the teachers of schools, colleges and universities have a responsibility in ensuring that these nearly 8000 teachers do not lose their jobs. We hope and trust that they will all unite and seriously move to compel the Government to forsake the policy of declaring the teachers surplus and retrenching them.

Damage in Assam Due to Recent Flood

Shillong, July 20—Assam is one of the most flood-prone areas in the whole of India. There hardly passes any year when some parts of this poor state are not affected by floods. In view of this reality, flood-protection measures should have obtained topmost priority in the scheme of development of Assam. But thanks to the uninterrupted Congress rule since independence of the country, no flood-protection measure worth the name has been adopted. The result is ravage of floods almost every year and consequent immeasurable damage and destruction of whatever little belongings the poor people have, untold sufferings of them, starvation-deaths and outbreak of epidemic diseases.

The current year also is no exception from this general order. According to an official estimate, this year's floods have affected 3 lakh villages, submerged 50 lakh acres of land of which 5 lakh acres are farm lands with standing crops, damaged completely Rs 10 crore worth of crops, destroyed several thousand houses and brought ruination to 15 lakh people of Assam, leaving aside the large number of persons who have died in and because of the floods.

We all know that official figures generally seek to minimise the gravity of the situation in such cases for obvious reasons. Even then the above-mentioned official estimate of the loss, damage and destruction caused by this year's floods in Assam presents a catastrophic picture. In the face of so calamitous a situation any civilised government would have taken the people and all the political parties in the state into confidence, mobilised all its resources to bring immediate succour to the flood-affected people, adopted adequate and proper measures for relief and rehabilitation of them and gone whole hog to explore all possibilities to introduce without delay comprehensive flood-protection projects for permanent solution of the chronic problem. But this is expecting too much from Congress Government in the state. The Congress leaders and the Ministers, who have not the misfortune of being victims of the fury of floods, find

little time and interest in alleviating the acute sufferings of the flood affected people and solving the problem of flood. They are more engaged and interested in carrying on activities against their respective rival groups, any how clinging to position, pursuing their craziness for power and pelf and looting the toiling people of the state by all means. So under these circumstances what generally happens is taking place in Assam also. The flood-afflicted people are languishing in their miseries; petty group politics and interests of the Congress brand are reigning supreme even in the matter of whatever little relief work is being done with great fanfare; the much-talked of Brahmaputra River Valley Scheme is gathering dust in official files and there is no serious attempt on the part of the so-called big democratic opposition parties functioning in the state to organise the people, unite the left and democratic parties, adopt a practical programme of sustained mass movements against the ruling Congress Government at the centre and in the state and actually develop such a movement in the genuine interest of the development of Assam and its toiling people.

On behalf of the Assam State Committee of the SUCI, Com. Ashit Bhattacharya has, in a statement, drawn the attention of the people and the left and democratic parties in Assam to this state of affairs and called upon them to solidly organise

Congressmen and Jotedar Attack SUCI Supporters

Muzaffarpur, July 10—On 18th June last in broad day light a gang of about 50 anti-social elements armed with fire-arms and other deadly weapons under the leadership of a local Congress tout and jotedar, Anandi Thakur, raided, looted and set fire to a number of small shops at the Rupaul Bazar under Kanti police-station in the district of Muzaffarpur.

The poor shop-keepers whose shops have thus been looted and burnt down are the supporters of the SUCI and they actively supported the agricultural labourers of the locality in their recent struggle under the banner of the Kanti Thana Kisan Aur Khet Mazdoor Sangh against the jotedars for higher wages. The support by the shop-keepers to the agricultural labourers had enraged the jotedars so much so that the latter, in order to teach the poor shop-keepers a lesson and terrorise them to sub-

mission, carried on their criminal vandalism against them.

It is strange that the so-called custodians of law and order have not taken any action against the miscreants. Perhaps, there is no strangeness in this attitude of the police and the administration towards criminal activities committed by the rich Congressmen against the rural poor. For, under the present Congress regime in the state this has become the order of the day.

Vast Areas in Orissa Flooded

Jajpur, July 22—Vast areas in Balasore and Cuttack districts have been flooded by Brahmani, Baitarani and Kharasuan, the three rivers of sorrow of Orissa state, affecting about half a million of people.

According to reliable source, more than 250 villages with an estimated population of about 3,00,000 in the Jajpur sub-division of Cuttack district and a similar number of people in the Bhadrak sub-division of Balasore district have been seriously affected by the recent floods in the three rivers.

It is known to all that these parts of Orissa are a victim of floods almost every year, resulting in untold sufferings of the people who

them and prepare themselves for a sustained united mass-movement to realise the long-standing democratic demands of the people. He has appealed to all the democratic opposition parties to sit together and adopt a practical programme of sustained mass movements against the Congress Governments and the vested interests.

have been agitating for adoption of flood-protection measures without delay for several years. But it is a pity that despite tall promises by the Congress party, its Governments, leaders and ministers as also by those who are now united in the Pragati Party, nothing whatsoever has been done by the former as well as the present rulers of Orissa to save the poorest state in the whole of India from the ravages of chronic floods and the people, particularly the poor section, from miseries associated with floods. Multi-purpose river valley projects can not only save the flood-prone areas from the havoc of flood but also ensure irrigation facilities to the drought affected areas in the state. But nevertheless, Orissa even after about twenty-six years of independence still remains

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BANGLA BANDH

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could not respond to the bandh call properly. The Congress has nothing to be elated over it. The fact of the bandh not being successful is wholly deceptive in as much as it does in no way prove that the people have no indignation against the Congress and the Congress Government and that they do not want any bandh or, for that matter, any other form of movement against Congress misrule.

Our request to CPI(M)

By their unprincipled and opportunist support to the CPI's disruptive bandh call, which in actuality was a conspiracy under cover of a bandh call to frustrate the possibilities of developing a sustained mighty united movement in West Bengal, the CPI(M) leadership have not only disrupted the process of development of the unity of the left and democratic parties and forces in this state and dealt a severe blow to the development of a sustained united mass movement already initiated at different levels by some of the eight parties but also by their most callous and escapist attitude of not making any serious and sincere effort to make the bandh successful allowed the situation to pass completely into the hands of the Congress and given the Congress the opportunity, may be a temporary one, to patch up its internal squabbles and regain to a degree its fast-disappearing unity. This is no small damage to the genuine interest of the people and united mass movements. We request the CPI(M) ranks and supporters to ponder over as to who has gained by their party's support to the disruptive bandh call of the CPI—the Congress or the people.

We appeal to the people

of West Bengal to come forward so as to enable us to carry forward the programme adopted by the eight parties for developing a sustained mighty united mass movement. We urge upon the CPI(M) to shun opportunist politics and strive for developing a sustained united mass movement in accordance with the programme of the eight parties. If the CPI really wants to develop mass movements to give some measure of relief to the suffering people then it must give up its disruptive game and join hands with other left and democratic parties at least on specific issues. Unity of the left and democratic parties and forces and development of sustained mighty united mass movements against the ruling capitalist class, its main political representative, namely the Congress, the Congress Governments at the Centre and in West Bengal and their anti-people policies still remain the need of the hour.

Cuttack Bandh Total Success

Cuttack, July 21—The bandh, call for which was given by the SUC, CPI(M), SSP and the SP, was a complete success. Buses, rickshaws and other vehicles were off the roads; shops and markets school and colleges remained completely closed; all commercial activities were brought to a halt and there was no attendance of employees in even Government offices today. The 24-hour bandh call sponsored by these left parties against the steep rise in prices of food and other essential commodities and other anti-people policies of the Congress Government brought normal life in Cuttack to a standstill.

Develop Sustained United Movement

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It is for the people of the state to realise it and accordingly organise themselves. It is for the left and democratic parties functioning in Bihar to rise to the occasion, forsake sectarianism, unite on the basis of an agreed programme covering the democratic demands of the people, organise the masses, adopt a programme of a sustained united mass movement against the ruling capitalist class, the Congress Governments and their anti-people policies and actually lead the people to militant mass struggles. The SUCI has been striving and will continue to strive hard to perform these tasks on the one hand and on the other hand, will carry on ideological struggles with the clear perspective of helping in the crystallisation of the correct political line of revolution in our country, the proper training and education of our people and the emergence and establishment of

the leadership of the revolutionary working class party over the masses, their organisations for conducting day-to-day class struggles and democratic movements and such struggles and movements by them without which the class struggles and the democratic movements will fail to reach their logical conclusion.

Orissa Flood

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one of the states with the lowest percentage of irrigated land and flood-protected areas.

The Orissa Krushak O Khet Majuria Sangh has taken up a programme of mass campaign to mobilise public opinion and develop mass movements against the criminal negligence of the authorities, the Congress party and its Governments to adopt flood-protection-cum-irrigation measures to save the state and its people from chronic floods and droughts.

Sm. Gandhi Suppresses Truth On Price-rise and Relief Measures

Sm. Indira Gandhi told the Congress Parliamentary Party on July 21 that the present rise in prices are the result of drought and Indo-Pakistan war of 1971. She had also said that the relief work undertaken by the Congress Government in the drought-stricken areas was such as 'had not been undertaken any where in the world.'

This assertion by her is wrong like all her earlier assertions. Had last and present years' drought and Indo-Pak war of 1971 been the main cause of the present rise in prices then there would not have been any rise

in price before 1971. But the reality is that since independence prices are continuously rising. Even if we go by the official figures, which are an understatement, our rupee which gave 100 paise in 1949 was worth 74.6 paise in 1963, 47.8 paise in 1967, 39.5 paise in December '72, 37 paise in April 1973 and 30 paise now. These official figures give the lie to what Sm. Gandhi had said about the prices. So far as relief work is concerned, the less said the better. Orissa, Bihar, U.P., Kerala and other states prove to be completely false what the Prime minister had said about relief work.